U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

COMMUNICATIONS

Key District Congressional Interactions

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Key District Congressional Interactions

- Execution Plan developed for Congressional Interactions as part of the Tulsa District Communications Plan.
- Congressional Visits:
  - Two formal briefings
    - Washington DC after President's Budget is released (Early March)
    - OK, KS, TX invited to District Briefing after President signs current year budget (Fall)

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- Interim congressional briefings as needed to discuss on-going issues on programs/projects.

- Encouraging visits from Washington staff members to Tulsa District (staffers from Congressman Carson and Senator Nickles Office visited in February).

- Initial meetings with newly elected Congressmen (Carson and Sullivan).

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- Tulsa District newsletter sent out semi-annually to regional customers within the states of OK, TX, KS. Newsletters update customers/congressional offices on Corps projects/issues in their areas.

Tulsa District Newsletter

Tulsa District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Servicing Oklahoma and areas of Texas & Kansas

October 2000

ARKANSAS RIVER BASIN

Mingo Creek Local Protection Project "Finally Reaches the Finish Line"

Twenty years ago, the City of Tulsa had the dubious reputation of having more national disaster declarations than any other community in the nation, with correspondingly high flood insurance rates. This reputation was largely the result of frequent flooding from Mingo Creek and its tributaries.

On average, Mingo Creek flooded once every 2-3 years. Since 1959, 10 major floods have been recorded. Mingo Creek peaks very quickly with little warning time to residents, often within 30 minutes after a heavy rain. It also recedes quickly, after only 1 to 6 hours. During a 100-year flood, the creek could rise 4 to 8 feet over the creek bank.

Mingo Creek's sudden flooding was particularly evident on Memorial Day Weekend (May 26 and 27), 1984. Within 24 hours, 15 inches of rain fell within the Mingo Creek watershed. Fourteen people died, 88 people were injured, and over 7,000 structures were damaged. Damages totaled $125 million.

The Mingo Creek project was authorized with passage of WRDA 1986 and consists of construction of 23 floodwater detention sites and approximately 10 miles of channelization on Mingo Creek and its tributaries within the city of Tulsa, Oklahoma. Construction initiated September 1988. Over 19 separate contract actions were used to build this project. We are pleased to announce that all construction efforts are scheduled for completion in November 2000.

Today, due to the efforts of the City of Tulsa and the Corps of Engineers, the City of Tulsa has earned the No. 1 spot in the national flood insurance program. Out of 18,300 communities participating in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance program, participating policyholders in Tulsa have the lowest flood insurance rates. Those distinctions earned Tulsa's Mayor and Public Works Director the FEMA Public Service Award.

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- Area/Lake Managers participate in local level congressional meetings on project issues.
- Effective relationships developed between district and local congressional staff members.
- Engage Stakeholders as key contacts with congressional representatives.

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- Include congressional staffers in meetings for sensitive projects.

- Participate in developmental assignment opportunities on Capitol Hill.

- Implemented new Standard Operating Procedure for responding to Congressional Inquiries. These inquiries are responded to within 5 working days.

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SUMMARY

- Commander congressional interactions are important, but not as important as those interactions with key civilians.

- Take advantage of the relationships where they exist, and continually build new relationships.

- Communicate openly, honestly and often.